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Linda McCulloch
Superintendent

January 14, 2004

To: Authorized Representatives
Directors of Special Education
Special Education Personnel
Test Coordinators

From: Bob Runkel, Administrator
Division of Special Education

Judy Snow, Director
State Assessment

Regarding: Guidance to Schools on How to Include Students With Disabilities in Montana's
Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT)

The enclosed document provides guidance to schools on participation of students with disabilities on the Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT) and the alternate assessment to the Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT-Alternate).

This information includes:

- Guidelines for determining students with disabilities participation in the CRT-Alternate
- Accommodations (standard and non-standard) for participation in the regular CRT
- CRT Eligibility Worksheet: A form to assist IEP teams in documenting their decisions for administration of the alternate assessment

This guidance document should be carefully reviewed by district personnel to ensure that IEP team decisions pertaining to the use of accommodations in the administration of the Criterion-Referenced Test, as well as IEP team determinations that the student should take the alternate assessment to the Criterion-Referenced Test, are consistent with policies and procedures contained in the enclosed documents.

The policies and procedures that must be followed for the administration of the Criterion-Referenced Test and the alternate test to the Criterion-Referenced Test are significantly different than the procedures that are followed for the administration of the Iowa Tests and the alternate test (Alternate Assessment Scale) to the Iowa Tests.

The information contained in this guidance document incorporates changes in procedures necessary to implement the recently adopted United States Department of Education No Child Left Behind (NCLB) rule on participation of students with significant cognitive disabilities on the alternate assessment that are used to determine adequate yearly progress (AYP) under NCLB.

To assist special education directors and teaching personnel in learning more about the CRT-Alternate and its administration, training has been scheduled for the following dates. Special education personnel are encouraged to attend.

Training Dates:

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| Feb. 13 | <u>CRT- Alternate Assessment Administration</u>
Video Conference for Special Education Directors and Teachers
8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. at sites across the state
Detailed information and registration in January JUMP |
| Feb. 18 | <u>Q & A Follow up to CRT- Alternate Assessment Administration</u>
Live video stream online
2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
E-mail and call in questions live
Detailed information and registration in January JUMP |
| Feb. 19 | <u>Q & A Follow up to CRT Alternate Assessment Administration</u>
Interactive video conference
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. at sites across the state
Detailed information and registration in January JUMP |

The January JUMP newsletter will be available on the OPI Web site at www.opi.state.mt.us/assessment/index.html by 5:00 p.m. on January 26, 2004.

A copy of this memorandum and the enclosure are available on the OPI Web site at www.opi.state.mt.us/speced/index.html under the heading Guides—CRT-Alternate Assessment.

If you have questions concerning the content or guidance contained in these documents, please call Judy Snow at 406-444-3656 or Bob Runkel at 406-444-4429.

Enclosure